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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 001461

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/29/2014

TAGS: ETTC PREL CU HO

SUBJECT: TEGUCIGALPA RESPONSE TO NSC-DIRECTED REVIEW

REGARDING WAIVER OF TITLE III OF THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: STATE 135512

Classified By: Political Counselor Francisco Palmieri;  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The Government of Honduras (GOH) has actively worked to advance democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba. On April 15, the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) passed a Honduran-sponsored resolution calling for greater respect for human rights in Cuba. The Government of Cuba responded to the GOH's action by suspending pending maritime boundary negotiations with Honduras, something that has been a foreign policy priority of President Ricardo Maduro's administration. Also, while the GOH does have formal diplomatic relations with Cuba, Honduras has not named an Ambassador to Cuba, partly out of deference to U.S. wishes. However, the GOH consistently and publicly states that concern over Cuba's human rights policies is a fundamental tenet of its policy toward the Castro regime.

¶2. (C) If the Title III waiver were not renewed for Honduras, it could undermine clear GOH support for pressuring Cuba to improve its human rights record, undermine general GOH support for U.S. Cuba policy, and unnecessarily punish a supportive regional ally.

Palmer